

Transportation Chapter Meeting Summary

Tuesday, April 10, 2007 ▫ 4 - 6 PM

Central Corridor Resource Center ▫ 1080 University Avenue

Task Force members present: Rob Barbosa, David Greene, Mary Jackson, Betsy Leach, Paul Savage, Alice Tibbetts, Dave Van Hattum

Staff: Christina Danico, Mike Klassen, Allen Lovejoy

Christina Danico distributed a first draft of a list of "major trends." She explained that this would be a running draft that the task force could shape to help focus policy discussion.

Mike Klassen presented the functional classification system that is done in coordination with the Metropolitan Council. Some discussion was had about the classified types and various road segments that might need to be reclassified. Klassen then went through the list of Public Works roads projects for construction or improvement. The projects are listed below:

1. Central Corridor: The Corridor is the number one priority for the Public Works transportation group.
2. Pierce Butler extension: In the extension, Pierce Butler would be reconfigured to look more like Phalen Boulevard, with 30 mph speed limits and bikeable shoulders.
3. NW Quadrant Transportation Study – Study area includes the bioscience corridor, Hwy 280, and connections to Minneapolis. It would be an opportunity to incorporate better transit, possible new bike routes, and resolve both north/south and east/west connectivity issues.
4. Signal Reconstruction at Snelling & I-94
5. Snelling University Capacity Study – The study and the future of the intersection will be further discussed at a meeting on April 23 at 7 pm at the Central Corridor Resource Center.

There was some discussion between staff and task force members about the reasons for these projects. Klassen stated that the projects are often done to help shift traffic off of neighborhood streets, or to better utilize undeveloped land. Alice Tibbets asked more about how these projects connect to expanding transit service, future energy scenarios, and a reduction in CO₂ emission. Allen Lovejoy introduced the idea of bus service over bus coverage as studied by the Metropolitan Council's 1996 Sector Studies. Lovejoy explained the multiple bus markets that exist in major corridors, such as the need for three types of service in the Central Corridor (local, limited stop, and express). Ideally, he noted, it is more valuable to have 5 to 10 minute service than more bus lines.

Dave Van Hattum questioned why VMT (vehicles miles traveled) had been flattening, and why reports showed that congestion was down for three years in row. Betsy Leach added that behavior may already be changing. Staff agreed that they needed to further research changing behavior, specifically, changes in VMT.

Returning to the project map, the staff discussed existing street widths and improvements on Maryland, White Bear, and Shepard. Task force members discussed how these street projects might be better explained in the comprehensive plan by listing specific project goals, such as building better pedestrian amenities, enhancing connectivity for better land utilization, improving safety, or shifting traffic from neighborhood streets to arterials.

Mary Jackson asked if bicycle and pedestrian crash information had been factored into the decisions to do these projects and asked about pedestrian accommodations on high traffic streets. Klassen explained that federal money prioritized bike and pedestrian improvements as a part of road improvements. There was some discussion, led by Tibbets, about reducing certain streets from 4 to 3 lanes to calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety. She said she could help provide research where this has been done successfully on higher traffic streets. Klassen said there was usually a limit to what could be done on streets with higher ADT, like White Bear Avenue.

Lovejoy distributed the Metropolitan Council's *2000 Travel Behavior Inventory* form August 2003.